

The autopsy report which was enclosed is as follows:

Los Angeles County Health Department
To: Dr. J. L. Pomeroy.
From: George H. Roth, M. D.
Date: September 21, 1932.
Subject: Alfred E. Yoder—Case of Rabies.

July 25, 1932—11:45 A. M., Mr. Yoder bitten in Glendale City. 12 M., wound treated and dressed by Doctor Kaufman. 12 M., one dose Pasteur treatment.

July 26—Yoder called at Glendale Health Center. One Pasteur treatment by Dr. Kaufman. Medical Social Service arranged for Pasteur vaccine from General Hospital and referred patient to Burbank health officer.

July 27—One Pasteur treatment by Doctor Ransome, Burbank.

July 28—Two Pasteur treatments by Doctor Ransome, Burbank.

July 29—Two Pasteur treatments by Doctor Ransome, Burbank.

July 30—Two Pasteur treatments by Doctor Ransome, Burbank.

July 31—Two Pasteur treatments by Doctor Ransome, Burbank.

August 1—Two Pasteur treatments by Doctor Ransome, Burbank.

August 2—One Pasteur treatment by Doctor Ransome, Burbank.

August 3—One Pasteur treatment by Doctor Ransome, Burbank.

August 4—One Pasteur treatment by Doctor Ransome, Burbank.

Total—Sixteen doses in eleven days, following bite. Patient discontinued treatments. Five treatments due but not taken.

August 19—Onset of illness: difficulty in swallowing; vomiting.

August 21—Dr. C. T. Hallburg called.

August 22—Dr. C. H. Carpenter called. Difficulty in swallowing. Blood pressure 150/56; "Consolidation noted in lungs."

August 23—Patient died in convulsions at 10:17 A. M.

August 23 and 24—Autopsy by Dr. A. F. Wagner, Los Angeles County autopsy surgeon. Finding: Patient died as result of having been bitten by a "mad dog" and that pneumonia and other conditions found were secondary to the prime cause of death, which was rabies.

September 14—Coroner's inquest—Jury returns verdict: "Cause of death—rabies; secondary, pneumonia and other conditions."

(Signed) GEORGE H. ROTH, M. D.,
Director, Bureau of Communicable Disease Control.

October 15, 1932.

Dear Doctor Pomeroy:

Thank you for your letter of October 7 directed to me in care of the Los Angeles Times. I appreciate the irritation which my published statements must give you, and so I don't mind in the least the scolding you take occasion to give me.

But I want to say, just between ourselves, that I think the abstract of the case of alleged rabies that went to autopsy is one of the least convincing I have received—and I have received many reports of cases of alleged rabies in man. In fact the abstract gives no clue to the cause of death and makes no allusion to any evidence of rabies the autopsy may have revealed.

Even if this was a genuine and unquestionable case of rabies in man, under the circumstances may I not ask, just between ourselves and not for the public, whether any harm is done by my vehement assertions that rabies can't or does not happen in man? I mean, suppose I had been the physician in that particular case. I would have advised the Pasteur treatment, and I do invariably advise it, in spite of my own doubt that rabies occurs in man. What, then, is your objection to my teaching?

Again, what difference did it make in the outcome of the illness that the man received sixteen doses of virus in the eleven days following the bite? And I might fairly ask what difference does it ever make in any case to give fourteen or twenty-eight doses of Pasteur virus. It seems to me that the scientific evidence rather indicates that the treatment itself is a cause of death or a contributing cause in too many such cases.

Certainly I do not wish to add any difficulty to the work of any health authority. No one can quote me as encouraging or creating any such obstacle to the work of the health officer. I think perhaps your annoyance is partly due to my attitude toward some of the absurdities of health departments.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) WILLIAM BRADY.

William Brady, M. D.,
265 El Camino,
Beverly Hills, California.

Dear Doctor Brady:

In reference to rabies you ask the question as to what harm your public statement that rabies does not occur in man might have on the public. May I state I have had some twenty years' experience in public health work and know whereof I speak when I say that statements of this kind from an M. D. are used by antivivisectionists and organizations of this kind before local governing bodies to show that medical opinion is divided on the question to prevent the passage of ordinances regulating rabies in dogs.

There were 2670 persons bitten by dogs in Los Angeles County territory last year, 418 of whom were given Pasteur treatment. We have had several areas of the county in quarantine from time to time because of rabies in animals, and the total cost of this work, together with impounding, runs close to \$30,000 annually. We have had six deaths from rabies during the past few years, but we have as yet been unable, because of objection from the antis, to even secure an adequate licensing ordinance to offset the cost of supervision and to get rid of stray dogs.

You state: "No one can quote me as encouraging or creating any such obstacle to the work of the health officer." I do not see how you can prevent any person from quoting your remarks that rabies does not exist among mankind, and I assure you that in all probability will be used against the Health Department.

I consider you have a wonderful opportunity to assist in the most difficult task of education of the public in the scientific facts relating to the prolongation of life and the hygiene of living. I do not know, of course, if you have ever had any administrative experience in public health, but I sincerely believe that your statements concerning rabies are against the best interests of public health and place you in this respect along with the antivivisectionists and other enemies of public health progress.

This is my sincere and honest opinion as a health officer with the hope that you possibly may realize the effects of your statement, which you are perhaps not fully cognizant.

Very truly yours,

J. L. POMEROY, M. D.,
Los Angeles County Health Officer.

October 29, 1932.

Dear Doctor Pomeroy:

Thank you for the patience you show with me. I know my attitude must irk you, yet I cannot change my view unless I get convincing evidence.

You impute to me a statement that rabies does not occur in man. My invariable statement is that I don't know whether the disease occurs in man, that the evidence we have does not seem convincing to me, and that I should give the patient the benefit of the doubt in any case—that is, the Pasteur treatment to prevent development of disease if the physician in attendance deems it advisable.

If any anti-organization ventures to cite me or my statements about this I'll undertake to make a suitable refutation.

I should join any body of people who might oppose any attempt to establish a dog-licensing racket under any pretext whatever. If your campaign against rabies includes the licensing of dogs, your position is surely a weak one. Even if the county could possibly maintain an effective dog quarantine, the measure would be as effective as the shotgun quarantine against yellow fever was in the old days.

What, only 2670 persons bitten in Los Angeles County last year? You didn't hear of the tenth of them! I venture to say at least forty thousand persons were bitten. Only the more ignorant, superstitious